

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
for the
Eastern District of Michigan

United States of America

v.

Tiwan Phelan

Case No. 2:25-mj-30382
Judge: Unassigned,
Filed: 06-12-2025 At 11:42 AM
SEALED MATTER (DA)

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of April 8, 2025 through April 16, 2025 in the county of Washtenaw in the
Eastern District of Michigan, the defendant(s) violated:

Code Section
18 U.S.C. § 922(o)

Offense Description
Possession of a machine gun

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:
See attached affidavit.

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence
and/or by reliable electronic means.

Date: June 12, 2025

City and state: Detroit, MI


Complainant's signature

Joshua Loy, Special Agent, ATF
Printed name and title


Judge's signature


Hon. Elizabeth A. Stafford, United States Magistrate Judge
Printed name and title

AFFIDAVIT

I, Joshua Loy, being duly sworn, depose and state the following:

I. INTRODUCTION

1. I am a Special Agent with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). I have been employed as a special agent with the ATF since June 2018. I am an “investigative or law enforcement officer of the United States” within the meaning of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2510(7), and I am empowered to conduct investigations and make arrests of offenses enumerated under federal law. I am currently assigned to the ATF Detroit Field Division’s Ann Arbor office. I graduated from the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center and the ATF Special Agent Basic Training Course. I am responsible for investigating violations of federal firearms laws, among other crimes.

2. During my time in law enforcement, I have participated in numerous criminal investigations involving firearms crimes, armed drug tracking violations, and offenses by criminal street gangs, among others. I have conducted and been a part of multiple investigations involving the possession of machine gun conversion devices (MCD). I’m familiar with slang terminology which individuals use regarding these items. I know that when someone utilizes words such as “switch”, “button”, and “fully”, they are aware of the device’s capabilities of an MCD to convert the firearm into a machine gun. I also know the use of a  emoji, which

is the emoji that shows up when you type in switch in Apple messages, is synonymous for a “Glock switch” or MCD.

3. I make this affidavit from personal knowledge based on my participation in this investigation, including interviews conducted by myself and/or other law enforcement agents, communications with others who have personal knowledge of the events and circumstances described herein, review of reports by myself and/or other law enforcement agents, and information gained through my training and experience. The information outlined below is provided for the limited purpose of establishing probable cause and does not contain all the information known to law enforcement related to this investigation.

4. The ATF is currently investigating Tiwan PHELAN for violating 18 U.S.C. § 922(o) possession of a machine gun.

PROBABLE CAUSE

5. On April 16, 2025, members of the Washtenaw County Sheriff’s Office (WCSO) and members of the WCSO Community Action Team (CAT) responded to the scene of an armed robbery in Ypsilanti, Michigan. This led Deputies to a residence located at 9 [REDACTED] MacArthur Blvd where they obtained consent from the owner of the apartment (Tiwan PHELAN) to search the residence. Prior to the residence being searched, WCSO Deputy HOWARD

observed another individual named Jamar JOPLIN (B/M, XX/XX/2000) standing in front of the residence for a brief period.

6. Upon searching the residence, WCSO Deputies recovered items belonging to the robbery victims and the following firearms (recovered from a dryer in the basement, see images below),

- a. Springfield Hellcat, semiautomatic, 9mm, pistol, bearing S/N BA658561
- b. Taurus G2s, semiautomatic, 9mm, pistol, bearing S/N ABC40950
- c. Taurus GX4, semiautomatic, 9mm, pistol, bearing S/N AGA983810
- d. Springfield XD-S, semiautomatic, .45 caliber, pistol, bearing S/N XS613606
- e. Glock 23, .40 caliber, pistol, bearing S/N PFZ761, with a gold in color, machine gun conversion device attached.



State Search Warrant at 9 [REDACTED] MacArthur Blvd

7. WCSO Deputies and I returned to 9 [REDACTED] MacArthur Blvd, Ypsilanti, Michigan on April 25, 2025, to execute a state search warrant to obtain PHELAN's phone, DNA, and any additional items/information related

to the armed robbery. Once inside the residence, Deputies recovered PHELAN's phone and DNA.


8. A subsequent state search warrant was obtained to extract the information from PHELAN's cellphone device.

REVIEW OF MESSAGES BETWEEN JOPLIN AND PHELAN

9. On/about May 15, 2025, I completed a review of text messages between PHELAN and JOPLIN. I identified the phone contact of AB with the phone number of **734-657-1944** as belonging to JOPLIN. I queried the information in Accurint (a law enforcement database) which revealed the number to belong to JOPLIN. I reviewed this conversation and identified multiple communications where JOPLIN is communicating with PHELAN regarding the attempted sale and possession of what is believed to be the recovered Glock, model 23, pistol which had the gold in color machinegun conversion device (MCD) attached. In the text thread below, the chat bubbles in blue are PHELAN and the grey are JOPLIN.

DETAILS


ARTIFACT INFORMATION

First Name 



Phone Number(s) **+17346571944**






Created Date/Time **2/25/2025 2:21:25.000 AM**

Last Modified Date/Time **2/25/2025 2:21:25.000 AM**

Artifact type  Apple Contacts - iOS

Item ID **682**

  Jamar Joplin  54426943176 2655 Easy St, Ann Arbor, MI 48104  (734) 657-1944 - EDT 

Name: Jamar Joplin SSN: LexID: 54426943176

Address: 2655 Easy St, Ann Arbor, MI 48104 Phone: (734) 657-1944 - EDT Carrier: Omnipoint Communications Midwest Operations, LLC
Real-Time Phones
Active Phone Location: Dates: Dec 2024 - Dec 2024

10. On March 1, 2025, JOPLIN tells PHELAN “Pulling outside bring my gun to da door”. JOPLIN then states, “Finna sit wit her for a min”.

Local User <b7647c1cec5aaee06aee67049ff843e53567baea_files_aiq.zip>  Sent 3/1/2025 12:05:32.000 AM

Tell me when to open the door

+17346571944  Received 3/1/2025 12:16:16.000 AM

Bet

+17346571944  Received 3/1/2025 1:44:29.000 AM

Pulling outside bring my gun to da door

+17346571944  Received 3/1/2025 1:44:34.000 AM

Finna sit wit her for a min

11. On April 8, 2025, JOPLIN and PHELAN begin discussing the sale of what is believed to be the Glock, model 23, with the MCD, recovered eight days later during the April 16, 2025, consent search at PHELAN’S apartment.



JOPLIN instructs PHELAN to list the firearm for sale stating, “Tell mfs 23 for sale but they gotta take button off”. I know from training and experience, the word “button” refers to an MCD. From training and experience, and the context of the text, I know that usage of “23” in the text, in conjunction with usage of “button,” refers to the model of the gun, a Glock 23 with an MCD. PHELAN responds, “Bet it’s on”. Additionally, JOPLIN states, “Mfs ask we just had to hit a nigg wit it n need it gone fast idgaf who it is stg im sliming they ass, mfs gone still try to B koo with us anyways fuck it”. Based on the facts of the case (where a Glock, model 23, with an MCD is later recovered), my training and experience, and my communication with other law enforcement, it appears JOPLIN, (who has been identified as a Blood and per multiple sources, the leader of AB (a local gang in Washtenaw County), is stating he intends to rob or commit another violent act when utilizing the term “sliming.” JOPLIN is explicitly claiming he will be the one committing the act.



12. After PHELAN is approached by a potential buyer, JOPLIN later asks PHELAN, “Ask him do he kno how to take ffff off” followed by, “Tell him he kan get the whole package if he don’t but if he do we gotta take it off”. Based on the previous messages in this conversation, JOPLIN is asking PHELAN if the individual identified as the potential buyer knows how to take the MCD off. I know from training and experience, individuals like JOPLIN will often make efforts to mask their conversations of illegal activity with firearms and they will substitute various words and characters for items like MCDs. Based on my training, experience, conversations with other law

enforcement officers, and the full context of the conversation between JOPLIN and PHELAN, I believe “ffff” to refer to the MCD.



13. As the text conversation continues, on April 8, 2025, JOPLIN again asks PHELAN if the individual is attempting to purchase the Glock, model 23 with or without the MCD, specifically stating “He want it with  or with out”. I know from training and experience, the “ ” image in the text is used for slang for a machinegun conversion device which is also known as a “switch” or “button”. I know individuals who call these items “switches” do so because the device acts in the manner in which it “switches” the firearm from semiautomatic to full auto. Furthermore, JOPLIN tells PHELAN the firearm is to be sold for “no less than a band”. I know from training and experience a band is \$1,000 in U.S. currency. PHELAN later tells JOPLIN he had told the

individual “1000 wit it 700 without it”. Based on this conversation, PHELAN and JOPLIN are discussing the sale of the aforementioned Glock, model 23, with the MCD, for \$1,000 and \$700 without it. Given the context of this conversation, the use of the “switch” 🔄 emoji, and the difference in price of the firearm with or without it, I believe JOPLIN and PHELAN both not only understand what the MCD is, but also understand the purpose and value in the MCD converting the pistol to a full auto firearm.

+17346571944

He want it with 🔄 or with out

Received

4/8/2025 10:13:26.000 PM

Local User <b7647c1cec5aeee06aee67049ff843e53567baea_files_aiq.zip>

Yeah want it

Sent

4/8/2025
10:22:04.000 PM

+17346571944

What u tell em hm

Received

4/8/2025 10:24:22.000 PM

+17346571944

Tell em no less than a band

Received

4/8/2025 10:24:27.000 PM

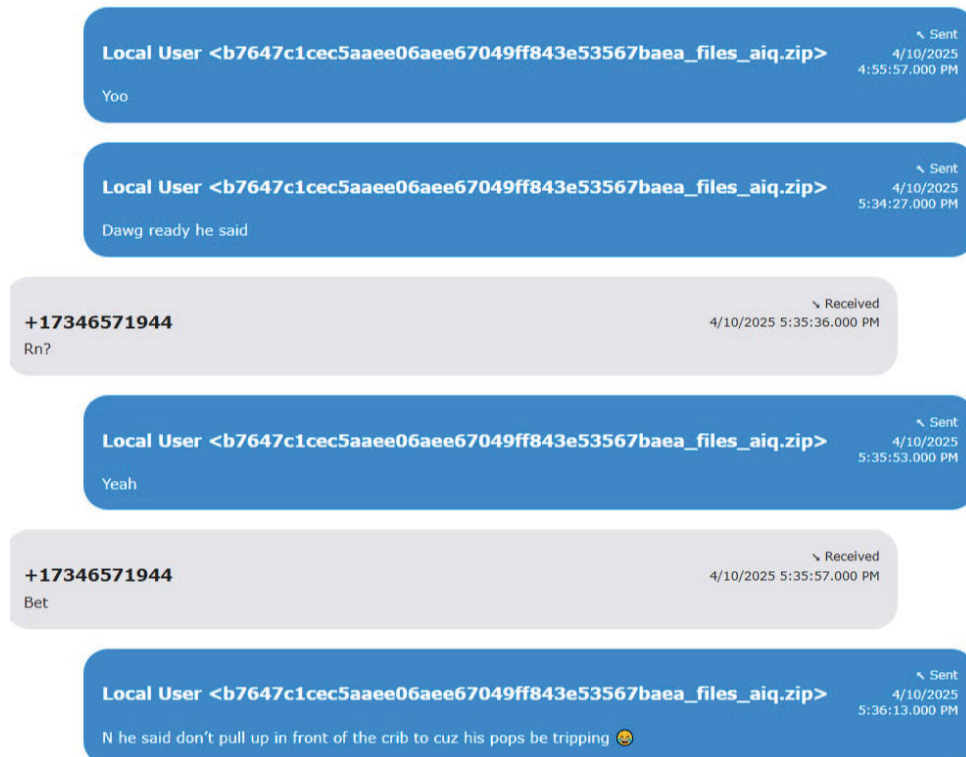
Local User <b7647c1cec5aeee06aee67049ff843e53567baea_files_aiq.zip>

1000 wit it 700 without it

Sent

4/8/2025
10:25:19.000 PM

14. The conversation regarding the sale of the aforementioned Glock, model 23, with the MCD, continues on April 10, 2025. PHELAN reaches out to JOPLIN and informs him the individual is ready to complete the sale. JOPLIN and PHELAN coordinate for JOPLIN to meet this buyer in the area of McCarthy and Lynn Streets, in Ypsilanti, Michigan. JOPLIN asks if this individual knows what PHELAN looks like to which PHELAN states he does not and JOPLIN subsequently states “bet this easy on baby”.





15. As depicted below, on April 16, 2025, PHELAN and JOPLIN exchange several texts regarding the armed robbery consent search of the residence from that day. During the conversation, JOPLIN states that his sister is going to come over to PHELAN's residence and that he will follow her there. JOPLIN instructs PHELAN to "put it in a bag" to which PHELAN responds stating "Alr did", "Got yo weed too", and "and the other shit too". PHELAN references "Steve" stating "Mann Steve talking about he was finna pull up n pick this shit up". Based collectively on Law Enforcement's information and my prior knowledge of JOPLIN, PHELAN, and the AB gang, this is believed to be Steve WILSON JR (B/M, XX/XX/1999). JOPLIN infers the juveniles are taking the fall ("standing tall") for the firearms recovered during the consent search and identifies "Spin" as one of the juveniles who

knows to take the fall and that he believes “Spin” to be 16 years old. “Spin” is known by Law Enforcement to be Seth PRIESTER based on the age referenced and my communication with WCSO Deputy Howard. WCSO Deputy Howard has been employed by WCSO for approximately 5 years. He is currently assigned to the Washtenaw County Community Action Team (CAT) that is tasked with investigating violent crimes and gang activity in the Ypsilanti Township area. Deputy Howard knows from past investigations and with regularly monitoring social media posts about the aliases that are used with the subjects involved with the “AB” group.

16. Additionally, WCSO Deputy Howard conducted a state search warrant on HENNING’S phone and located a text from HENNING to the contact labeled “spintwin” where he calls him “Seth”.

17. In texts on April 16, 2025, JOPLIN also takes ownership of the mistake of having others around at PHELAN’S residence specifically stating “An im on p line no way over a zip of my shit disappeared, this on us tho we shouldn’t of had any one around”. PHELAN also references securing a quantity of JOPLIN’S Marijuana in the residence. The text conversations in paragraphs 9-14, and those that follow, demonstrate that PHELAN retains physical custody of the contraband at the direction of JOPLIN, establishing joint possession until JOPLIN instructs PHELAN on how to dispose of the

contraband.

<p>+17346571944 My sister finna kome</p>	<p>Received 4/16/2025 9:15:29.000 PM</p>
<p>Local User <b7647c1cec5aeee06aee67049ff843e53567baea_files_aiq.zip> Yop</p>	<p>Sent 4/16/2025 9:18:01.000 PM</p>
<p>+17346571944 Put it inna bag</p>	<p>Received 4/16/2025 9:52:04.000 PM</p>
<p>+17346571944 Finna b dere</p>	<p>Received 4/16/2025 9:52:08.000 PM</p>
<p>Local User <b7647c1cec5aeee06aee67049ff843e53567baea_files_aiq.zip> Ain did</p>	<p>Sent 4/16/2025 9:52:17.000 PM</p>
<p>Local User <b7647c1cec5aeee06aee67049ff843e53567baea_files_aiq.zip> Got yo weed to</p>	<p>Sent 4/16/2025 9:52:22.000 PM</p>
<p>+17346571944 Bet im finna b dere</p>	<p>Received 4/16/2025 9:52:24.000 PM</p>
<p>Local User <b7647c1cec5aeee06aee67049ff843e53567baea_files_aiq.zip> N the other shit</p>	<p>Sent 4/16/2025 9:52:29.000 PM</p>
<p>+17346571944 Following my sister</p>	<p>Received 4/16/2025 9:52:31.000 PM</p>
<p>Local User <b7647c1cec5aeee06aee67049ff843e53567baea_files_aiq.zip> Bet</p>	<p>Sent 4/16/2025 9:52:48.000 PM</p>
<p>Local User <b7647c1cec5aeee06aee67049ff843e53567baea_files_aiq.zip> I got everything ready in this btc im ready to gtfo</p>	<p>Sent 4/16/2025 9:53:16.000 PM</p>
<p>+17346571944 Lmaooo u boufa gtfo to?</p>	<p>Received 4/16/2025 9:53:28.000 PM</p>

Local User <b7647c1cec5aeee06aee67049ff843e53567baea_files_aiq.zip>

4/16/2025 9:55:48.000 PM

Mannn steve talking about he was finna pull up n pick this shit up

+17346571944

Na im koo

Received

4/16/2025 9:56:30.000 PM

Local User <b7647c1cec5aeee06aee67049ff843e53567baea_files_aiq.zip>

4/16/2025 9:56:42.000 PM

Laughed at "Na im koo"

+17346571944

Nigga let his shit stick together

Received

4/16/2025 9:56:51.000 PM

+17346571944

Lil bro nem kno to stand tall tho

Received

4/16/2025 10:21:27.000 PM

+17346571944

Well spin kno fasho i think he is

Received

4/16/2025 10:21:39.000 PM

Local User <b7647c1cec5aeee06aee67049ff843e53567baea_files_aiq.zip>

4/16/2025 10:28:35.000 PM

Nah fr i was just saying that

Local User <b7647c1cec5aeee06aee67049ff843e53567baea_files_aiq.zip>

4/16/2025 10:28:53.000 PM

I'll take one but im gonna get kick out my shit if i do no bap

+17346571944

Na u good fr

Received

4/16/2025 10:32:40.000 PM

+17346571944

Spin a juvenile he gone take that shit n if it kome to it baby will nem is too that's all on dem

Received

4/16/2025 10:38:46.000 PM

+17346571944

An im on p line no way over a zip of my shit disappeared , this on us tho we shouldn't of had any one around

Received

4/16/2025 10:39:53.000 PM

Local User <b7647c1cec5aeee06aee67049ff843e53567baea_files_aiq.zip>

4/16/2025 10:47:00.000 PM

Nah fr he here nah i just got on his aas about that

+17346571944

My shit ain't disappear shit crazy

Received

4/16/2025 10:53:16.000 PM

Local User <b7647c1cec5aeee06aee67049ff843e53567baea_files_aiq.zip> 4/16/2025 10:53:50.000 PM % Sent
Mannn that's what I just said n meg just said the same shit only the bros been here

+17346571944 4/16/2025 10:58:28.000 PM % Received
Na rs tho n ik yall ain't do the shit

+17346571944 4/16/2025 10:59:15.000 PM % Received
It's koo tho yk this how a lot go im finna figure some stuff out for us don't even brip yk me im prepared for this just sit tight a few days if u wanna come to my brib or w.e yk yall good just imk

Local User <b7647c1cec5aeee06aee67049ff843e53567baea_files_aiq.zip> 4/16/2025 11:06:02.000 PM % Sent
Bet bro

Local User <b7647c1cec5aeee06aee67049ff843e53567baea_files_aiq.zip> 4/16/2025 11:15:47.000 PM % Sent
It was a 8th of yo weed in one of them book bags to gang

+17346571944 4/16/2025 11:15:58.000 PM % Received
U got it?

Local User <b7647c1cec5aeee06aee67049ff843e53567baea_files_aiq.zip> 4/16/2025 11:16:18.000 PM % Sent
Yeah I took it out before will can bounce out wit that bag

Local User <b7647c1cec5aeee06aee67049ff843e53567baea_files_aiq.zip> 4/16/2025 11:16:36.000 PM % Sent
That's why I told him to leave it there

+17346571944 4/16/2025 11:16:43.000 PM % Received
Slow

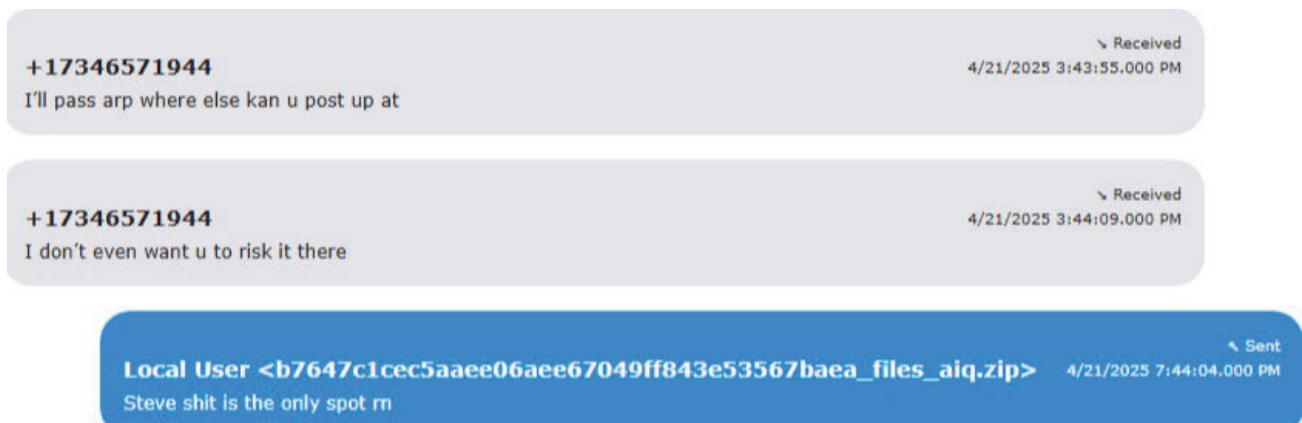
+17346571944 4/16/2025 11:16:52.000 PM % Received
I think that's the 8th I had onna table

Local User <b7647c1cec5aeee06aee67049ff843e53567baea_files_aiq.zip> 4/16/2025 11:17:23.000 PM % Sent
Yeah it's not in no box

+17346571944 4/16/2025 11:22:50.000 PM % Received
Man fw dese dumb lil nigggas

18. On April 21, 2025, JOPLIN stated, “I’ll pass arp where else kan u post up at” followed by “I don’t event want u to risk it there”. PHELAN

responds, “Steve shit is the only spot rn”. Through training and experience, I believe that in the text, JOPLIN is attempting to transfer what is believed to be an AR Pistol to PHELAN. PHELAN refers to an individual by the name of “Steve” (again, believed to be Steve WILSON JR) and they are indicating his residence is a safe location for the transfer.



REVIEW OF JAIL CALLS

19. On June 1, 2025, I received from ATF TFO Kyle Mountz 16 recorded jail calls made by Tyreece PITTS (a known member of AB and close associate of JOPLIN's) while detained at the Oakland County Jail. I know these calls to be made by PITTS because I have previously been involved in investigations involving PITTS and I recognize the voice to be PITTS. Additionally, these calls are to the phone number **734-657-1944** (number belonging to JOPLIN at the time of the calls). I confirmed with US Probation Agent Seth Martin who has previously spoken with JOPLIN while supervising

him and recognizes the voice communicating with PITTS to belong to JOPLIN and recognizes the voice of PITTS to be PITTS because Agent Martin has also supervised PITTS and had multiple communications with PITTS.

20. On April 17, 2025, at approximately 16:02:43 hrs, PITTS contacted JOPLIN at **734-657-1944**. During this call, JOPLIN discusses the armed robbery which occurred on April 16, 2025. JOPLIN identifies “Baby Spin” and “Vito” getting arrested at “POOKA’s” (PHELAN’S) place. S/A Loy knows from this investigation and communication with WCSO Deputy Howard, that “Baby Spin” (referenced in text messages above) is Seth PRIESTER (a juvenile and thus the “baby” reference) and “Vito” is Devausiare HENNING. PITTS subsequently inquires if JOPLIN had any of his belongings taken from PHELAN’s residence. JOPLIN responds to PITTS after approximately three (3) seconds of silence, and with a tone of disappointment, “Man”. PITTS, after approximately an additional four (4) seconds of silence, responds stating, “Oh my God” while also sounding disappointed. JOPLIN stated he isn’t worried as HENNING and PRIESTER “already know” and they are going to “stand tall”. I know from training and experience and from this investigation, JOPLIN is referring to not being worried because HENNING and PRIESTER are taking responsibility for the firearms recovered in PHELAN’s residence.

21. I know from training and experience individuals like JOPLIN, who has been identified by Law Enforcement as the leader of at least one (gang) in Washtenaw County, and are under Federal Supervision, will often not directly and solely maintain physical custody of firearms out of fear of getting caught, but will often indirectly and jointly maintain physical custody by having have other people/members hold on to their firearms for them as well as use another person's location to maintain safe keeping of these valuable items.

22. Additionally, I know from training and experience individuals like PHELAN who are associated with other gang members and leaders like JOPLIN, will maintain physical possession of contraband on behalf of them. Furthermore, the mere reference by JOPLIN and acknowledgement of the intended transaction and communication by PHELAN reveal they know what an MCD is and are utilizing street slang and coded terminology with the use of emojis and words like "switch" and "button" in an effort to obscure or disguise the content of their conversation.

REVIEW OF CRIMINAL HISTORY

23. I completed a review of Tiwan PHELAN's comprehensive criminal history (CCH) which revealed PHELAN has not been convicted of any felonies.

24. I consulted with S/A Mark Davis an interstate nexus expert who confirmed all of the aforementioned pistols, including the Glock, model 23, .40 caliber, pistol, bearing S/N PFZ761, with a gold in color, machine gun conversion device attached to it had travelled in interstate commerce.

CONCLUSION

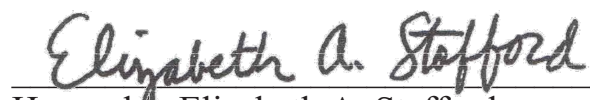
25. There is probable cause to believe that on April 8, 2025 through April 16, 2025, in the Eastern District of Michigan, Tiwan PHELAN, knowingly had joint possession of a firearm, to wit: a Glock, model 23, .40 caliber, pistol, bearing S/N PFZ761, with a gold in color, machine gun conversion device attached in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 922(o).

Respectfully submitted,



Special Agent Joshua Loy
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco,
Firearms and Explosives.

Sworn to before me and signed in my
presence and/or by reliable electronic means.



Honorable Elizabeth A. Stafford
United States Magistrate Judge

Date: June 12, 2025